

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 were pending in the application. Claims 3-6 were withdrawn. No claims have been added or cancelled. Therefore, claims 1-6 remain pending and are submitted for reconsideration.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,086,559 (“Akatsuchi”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,191,702 (“Goedecke”) or U.S. Patent No. 6,101,709 (“Shiota”). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 recites a machine for placing components on a circuit board that comprises, among other things, a transport device, at least one feeder area, at least one “Y-slide [that] is independently drivable in the X-direction,” and “at least two placement heads connected to said Y-slide so as to be independently drivable with respect to each other along the Y-slide in the Y-direction and to move together with the Y-slide when the Y-slide is driven in the X-direction.” Akatsuchi, Goedecke, and Shiota, taken separately or in any reasonable combination, fail to teach or suggest such a machine.

Akatsuchi, as admitted by the Examiner, fails to teach or suggest a machine for placing components on a circuit board that comprises a Y-slide with at least two placement heads. *See* Office Action at p. 3. The Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to modify the machine of Akatsuchi to include two independently drivable placement heads on the Y-slide as taught by Goedecke and Shiota. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully disagree.

Both Goedecke and Shiota teach devices in which the Y-slide is not drivable in the X-direction (in contrast to the present invention). For example, the Examiner refers to members 20a, 20b, 22a, and 22b of Goedecke as forming a Y-slide. Those members, however are connected between mounting plates 11 and 12 that are “spatially fixedly mounted.” Col. 7, lines 2-7. As a further example, the Examiner refers to the transfer head guide rail 22 of Shiota as constituting a Y-slide. The transfer head guide rails 22, however, are fixed in position with pitches that correspond to the pitches of corresponding part feeders. *See, e.g.,*

column 2, lines 57-65. In sum, in both Goedecke and Shiota the alleged Y-slide is not drivable in the X-direction.

Applicants submit that it would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of Akatsuchi, Goedecke, and Shiota in the manner suggested by the Examiner. The Akatsuchi device includes a Y-slide that is drivable in the X-direction. In both Goedecke and Shiota, the Y-slide is not drivable in the X-direction. Indeed, Shiota explains the significance of the location in the X-direction of the Y-slides relative to corresponding part feeders, thereby suggesting against any movement of the Y-slides. Accordingly, it would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of Akatsuchi (Y-slide driveable in the X-direction) with the teachings of Goedecke and Shiota (both Y-slides not driveable in the X-direction). Consequently, claim 1 is allowable over Akatsuchi, Goedecke, and Shiota.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and is allowable therewith, for at least the reasons set forth above, without regard to the further patentable subject matter set forth in this dependent claim.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.


The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is believed that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for

such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extension fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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